AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, further comprising:

converting the document to a plurality of searchable representation elements, and

determining, for each searchable representation, if the searchable representation element is a contact-related portion.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein determining if the searchable representation element is the contact-related portion comprises determining if the searchable representation element is at least one of a postal code, an email address, a location on a network and a telephone number.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein the comparing comprises:

comparing each identified contact-related portion of the plurality of searchable representation elements to contact information present in the database;

determining, for each identified contact-related portion, if the contact-related portion matches any contact information elements of the database;

determining, based on the assigned scores, for each match between the identified contact-related portions and the contact information elements, contact information elements that are related to the document.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the determining process comprises comparing the assigned scores for each match to a threshold score value.

7. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein assigning a score to each match between the identified contact-related portions and the contact information elements, comprises combining the scores assigned to at least two matches between at least two contact-related portions and at least one related contact information element into a combined score for at least one of the at least two matches.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein assigning a score to each match between the identified contact-related portions and the contact information elements comprises combining the scores assigned to at least two matches between at least one contact-related portion and at least two related contact information elements into a combined score for at least one of the at least two matches.

9. (Original) The method of claim 5, where assigning a score to each match between the identified contact-related portions and the contact information elements comprises assigning a combined score to at least one of at least two interrelated matches.

10. (Original) The method of claim 5, further comprising ranking the contact information elements based on the scores assigned to the matches for the contact information elements.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, further comprising forming a display list that includes the contact information elements corresponding to the_scores above a defined threshold.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein forming the display list that includes the contact information elements corresponding to the_scores above the defined threshold further comprises limiting the display list to at most n contact information elements having the highest values.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, further comprising forming a display list that includes the contact information elements corresponding to a given number n of scores having the highest values.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising displaying the display list on the monitor.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the monitoring comprises:

determining at least one representation of at least one contact information element present in the database; and

determining, for each determined representation, if there is at least one contact-related portion in the document that matches the determined representation.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein determining at least one representation of at least one contact information element present in the database comprises selecting at least one contact information element as the at least one determined representation.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16, wherein determining, for each determined representation, if there is at least one contact-related portion in the document that matches the determined representation comprises searching the document for instances of the selected contact information element.

18. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein determining at least one representation of at least one contact information element present in the database comprises generating at least one regular expression from at least one contact information element as the at least one determined representation.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein determining, for each determined representation, if there is at least one contact-related portion in the document that matches the determined representation comprises querying the document using the at least one generated regular expression.

20-21. (Canceled)

22. (Currently Amended) An information retrieval system, comprising:

a database that stores contact information;

an interface to a monitor displaying a document being currently viewed by a user, the user operating a task on the system;

a monitoring system monitoring the document via the interface and proactively extracting searchable text elements from the document being currently viewed; and

a contact information retrieval system that retrieves contact information from the database based on the searchable text elements and that displays the retrieved contact information without disrupting the user's task and the document displayed on the system.

23. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the database is populated by at least one of a personal name, an organization name, a position title, a business card image, a video recording, an audio recording, a postal address, a network location, an email address, and at least one telephone number.

24. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the contact information retrieval system comprises at least one of:

a context monitoring subsystem;

an information analysis subsystem; and

a contact information display subsystem.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the context monitoring subsystem recognizes at least one of a personal name, an organization name, a position title, a business card image, a video recording, an audio recording, a postal address, a network location, an email address, and at least one telephone number that is present in the document.

27. (Original) The system of claim 26, wherein the context monitoring subsystem recognizes the postal address by recognizing a postal code and stores in a memory the recognized postal code and a predetermined amount of data that precedes the postal code.

28. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 26, wherein the information analysis subsystem matches at least one of the personal name, the organization name, the position title, the business card image, the video recording, the audio recording, the postal address, the network location, the email address and the at least one telephone number to at least one contact information element stored in the database.

29. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 28, wherein the information analysis subsystem assigns a score to at least one matched one of the personal name, the organization name, the position title, the address, the network location, the email address and the at least one telephone number that matches at least one contact information element stored in the database.

30. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 28, wherein the information analysis subsystem assigns a partial score to at least one matched one of the personal name, the organization name, the position title, the address, the network location, the email address and the at least one telephone number that partially matches at least one contact information element stored in the database.

31. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 28, wherein the matched contact information is ranked based on the document and output to the user.

32. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein corollary information corresponding to the matched contact information is retrieved from the database.

33. (Original) The system of claim 32, wherein the matched contact information and the corollary information are made available to the user.

34. (Original) The system of claim 22, wherein the user is provided with an unobtrusive notification of the retrieved contact information.

35. (Original) The system of claim 34, wherein the notification allows the user to access more contact information by a single interaction.

36. (Currently Amended) An information retrieval apparatus, comprising:

a database containing contact information;

an information monitoring device for monitoring a current document being viewed by a user and being displayed on a computer display to proactively identify searchable text elements within the current document;

an analyzer comparing each of the searchable text elements to the contact information in the database to identify potential contact information;

an information analysis device that assigns a score to the identified potential contact information; and

a data output device that notifies a user of contacts based on scores associated with the potential contact information, without disrupting user's current task on the computer and without disrupting display of said current document.

37. (Original) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the information gathering device is at least one of a workstation, a desktop computer, a laptop computer, a scanner, an audio/video recorder, and a remote station.

38. (Original) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the data output device unobtrusively notifies the user of one or more contacts.

39. (Currently Amended) A method for operating a computer system, a task is performed by a user on the system, the method being performed by the computer system, the method comprising:

monitoring through an interface a current document displayed on a user monitor;

proactively identifying searchable portion on the current document;

comparing the searchable portion with a contact information stored in a database; and,

displaying the contact information on the monitor in accordance with the comparing result without disrupting user's task and the current document displayed on the computer.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, further comprising ranking the contact information prior to displaying.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, wherein the current document displayed on the user monitor is authored by the user, retrieved by the user, or presented to the user.

42. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 36, wherein the current document being viewed is authored by the user, retrieved by the user, or presented to the user.

43. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 22, wherein the document being currently viewed is authored by the user, retrieved by the user, or presented to the user.